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FM AMEMBASSY SARAJEVO

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7881

INFO RUEHDL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/JCS WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

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RUFOAOA/USNIC SARAJEVO BK PRIORITY

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EUR FOR DICARLO, EUR/SCE (HOH, FOOKS, STINCHCOMB); NSC FOR BRAUN; OSD FOR BEIN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PGOV PREL BK

SUBJECT: BOSNIA - PARLIAMENT CONFIRMS GOVERNMENT; DEBATES POLICE REFORM LEGISLATION; DEFERS SNSD DECLARATION

REF: A. 07 SARAJEVO 2370

1B. SARAJEVO 331

11. (U) Bosnia's House of Representatives on February 20 confirmed all nominations for the Council of Ministers. The government had been in technical mandate since November 1 when Nikola Spiric, Chair of the Council of Ministers and Prime Minister, resigned in protest over the imposition of the October 19 measures by High Rep Lajcak (Ref A). The Council of Ministers' lineup remains unchanged and is as follows: Chairman, Nikola Spiric; Foreign Affairs, Sven Alkalaj; Defense, Selmo Cikotic; Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, Slobodan Puhalac; Treasury, Dragan Vrankic; Civil Affairs, Sredoje Novic; Human Rights and Refugees, Safet Halilovic; Security, Tarik Sadovic; Justice, Barisa Colak; and Transportation and Communications, Bozo Ljubic.

12. (U) At the same session the House of Representatives also approved the state budget at 1.186 billion KM, the amount of the original proposal by the Council of Ministers. The budget now moves to the House of Peoples for final approval. The House of Representatives also engaged in a long debate on police reform legislation which, over the objections of SDA and SDP, it approved in its first reading, allowing the legislation to proceed to a committee review. The Joint Committee on Defense and Security will have the opportunity to review, and possibly amend, the legislation as early as February 25. (Details to follow septel).

13. (U) Due to the long debate over police reform and the budget the House of Representatives did not take up the SNSD proposed "Declaration of Responsibility," which among other things, confirms the RS as a "state entity" within Bosnia (Ref B). It appears that the next opportunity for parliament to take up the Declaration will be at the March 5 session of the House of Representatives.

ENGLISH